

New Records Management Keeps Documents Secure

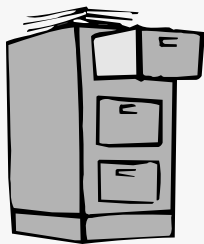
"Security, Integrity, and Access" are goals of the Records Management section at DEQ. In an effort to improve overall data and records management, the Department has designed an Integrated Data Management System (IDMS) that provides online access to all of DEQ's environmental information via one central system. The Document Management System, a subset of the IDMS, is the component that provides for the storage and retrieval of electronic images of the Department's business and facility records.

Wendy McLain, the Records Manager in the Information Services section, says, "One key advantage to the electronic system is increased security. I like to remind people that in our agency, the files are in very high use, not only by DEQ, but also by the public. The Document Management System enables us to maintain the security of our documents as well as providing for an off site copy."

Once a document is scanned into the Document Management System, the image is written to unalterable optical media. Each image is given a unique number so its index values and integrity in the Document Management System are ensured. Through a custom retrieval application, a person can view a copy of the imaged



Wendy McLain stands in front of the public access computers that use the ALPS retrieval software in the new fourth floor file room.



New File Room Gives Improved Public Access

The new Public Records Room on the fourth floor will become the one stop shop for DEQ documents early next year and is currently open for most needs. Instead of visiting several file rooms on each floor, all of the electronic documents may be found in a single location. The Public Records Room, located in room 4400, is open every business day from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Two attendants are there at all times to assist members of the public with the use of the ALPS system. The ALPS software allows users to search, display, and print public documents for any facility or site in DEQ's Document Management System.

Printing and paying for copies has never been easier. A user-friendly feature of the Public Records Room is the use of debit cards in order to pay for copies. Debit cards are available in various amounts ranging from a \$1 card to a \$100 card. The cards may be purchased with a check or money order from the attendant on duty in the room. Each printed page debits the card by the appropriate charge – which is \$0.25 unless you qualify for a reduced rate.

Wendy McLain, the Records Manager in the Information Services section, says about the new room, "It helps us respond to public requests more quickly and enables DEQ employees to do their jobs more efficiently."

document, rotate the image, zoom in or out, but cannot change the original. Most importantly, once documents are scanned, they cannot be lost, misfiled or destroyed.

Scanning all of the Department's documents is an immense task. The project is nearly 75% complete. Currently, all documents from the Ground Water, Underground Storage Tanks, and Inactive and Abandoned Sites, Solid Waste, and Hazardous Waste file rooms have been scanned and are retrievable electronically, with other file rooms to be completed soon. Once the contents of a particular file room have been scanned and the quality checked, the paper file room is closed. Those documents are then accessed from the Document Management System through a search and retrieval system program called ALPS.

Although all of the documents are accessible through ALPS, paper documents will be kept in an archive as long as necessary. Certain documents with historical value will be sent to the Louisiana State Archives for secure, long-term storage.

In creating the new Integrated Data Management System, DEQ looked toward the future. The Department plans continuous improvement and regular upgrades to the system. "You cannot buy a system, implement it, and then leave it alone and expect it to always be there for you when you're ready to use it," McLain says. "DEQ has made a commitment to keep this system current."

** Positive Feedback !**

I'm very impressed! A highly useable informative site that is updated frequently!

Hello! I was talking with a co-worker about the difficulties of keeping up with changing federal and state regulations today. (Like most problems, there is always a compromise between cost, accuracy and timeliness.) He said that he thought that the LDEQ website was the best at updating state regulations he's seen to date.

Heard RAVES about our public web site, unsolicited, no less! I was doing business w/ a man in MD over the phone and, when I asked if he had access to our public web (hoping to direct

him to info readily available at all times), he launched into very glowing and sincere appreciation for the layout, content, and overall user-friendliness of DEQ's website, saying he'd cruised numerous OTHER states' sites and found ours to be "the best!" He even repeated it!

You might want to share that praise with whomever else has had a hand in the evolution of our website. You're presenting us very well to the world at large. Nice job.

Dear Webmaster:

I would like to compliment you on your excellent educational resources at the Louisiana Dept. of Environmental Quality website.

We, here at the White House Cyber Library, just wanted to let you know that we are providing numerous links to your website from our "Science Department".

Please give our special congratulations to the developer of the "Smoginator" cartoon: quite original and creative!

Thanks! and please give our congratulations to everyone who has had a part in creating your website. Keep up the good work!

Hello, as I was perusing the LDEQ web site today, I thought I'd thank you for the hard work you & your team have performed in preparing and maintaining one of the better organized, "appealing to the eye" web sites.

I appreciate the web site organization, fonts and sizes used, as well as the lack of wallpaper on most of the web pages (a waste of bandwidth!), making use of the website quick & easy on the eye.

www.deq.state.la.us